

Public Works Committee, Town of Amherst  
meeting of Wednesday, March 16, 2005  
1st floor meeting room, Town Hall, 7:00pm

present: Michael Cann, Rob Crowner, Guilford Mooring, Walter Wolnik (observer)  
guests: Jim Brassord (Amherst College), Dan Dulaski (traffic consultant), Chris Wong (Berkshire Design Group)

### 1. Meeting agenda

In the absence of quorum, Michael and Rob agree to hear the presentation of the design for traffic-calming measures on South Pleasant Street adjacent to Amherst College. No recommendation can be made, but the presenters are already in attendance. Guilford proposes that the next scheduled meeting, April 5, be announced as the mandated public hearing for this project.

### 2. South Pleasant Street

Jim summarizes the history of this project, which is a continuation of the traffic-calming measures installed on College Street (Route 9) adjacent to Amherst College in the last couple of years. Chris and Dan explain the proposed design. The primary objective is pedestrian safety; the secondary objective is slowing traffic. The design approach is horizontal rather than vertical deflection of traffic, opposite to the approach on College Street.

The primary device to be employed would be mid-street safety islands at each of several crosswalks. The crosswalks themselves would be brick with granite trim and LED lighting, as on College Street, but they would not be raised. Surface-level tapered boulevards would extend from the safety islands and guide vehicles away from straight-line progress, theoretically slowing traffic. The roadway would be narrower than at present, and canopy trees would be planted at the roadside to soften the landscape. The safety islands would have mountable curbs to facilitate bus and truck entry to driveways and side streets. Bike lanes would be a uniform four feet wide, with vehicle travel lanes eleven feet wide.

Guilford explains that the committee's role, beyond hosting the public hearing, is to make a recommendation on the proposal, which can happen after the rest of the committee has seen it at the next meeting. All relevant committees will have made their recommendations by then, and the Select Board will decide whether to approve the project. The only town money that would be used in the project would come from existing Chapter 90 funds for resurfacing work, so Town Meeting does not need to vote on it. Pending approval, work would begin June 1 and be completed over the summer.

An attempt will be made to change the desire lines of foot traffic across South Pleasant, particularly with regard to the College Hall destination near the 116/9 intersection. Improvements in the technology and utility of the crosswalk lighting - including possible automation - are being investigated. Other options, including traffic lights and roundabouts, were considered but not put into the design. Electric conduits will be

installed at the Hitchcock Street intersection just in case a traffic light is desired and approved in the future.

Guilford states that more gaps in Route 9 traffic have been observed as a result of the raised crosswalks, allowing easier access onto College Street from smaller entry points. A similar, though not as pronounced, effect is anticipated at the Snell Street intersection as a result of the South Pleasant Street project. Guilford explains that pushing traffic problems increasingly farther out from their source gradually reduces their size and changes how they can be dealt with.

### 3. Other business

Guilford states that the sidewalk prioritization information originally scheduled to be discussed at this meeting is not yet ready.

In response to a question from Michael, Guilford explains that the Groff Park restroom will be rebuilt following vandalization with money encumbered for this purpose a number of years ago.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rob Crowner